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Fall 2012

Review of *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*. By Paulette Regan.

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Green, Robyn, "Review of *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*. By Paulette Regan." (2012). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 1251.

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Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada. By Paulette Regan. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010. xii + 299 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. C\$85.00 cloth, C\$34.95 paper.

The Canadian settler state has enacted egregious practices of assimilation, dispossession, and genocide against First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples throughout its history. Running contrary to these practices are the prevailing narratives found in Canadian historical texts and settler national myths. In *Unsettling the Settler*, Paulette Regan addresses this contradiction by analyzing the “peacemaker” myth, which she suggests is deployed by the state to construct a history of settler innocence. In light of this, any acknowledgment of historical injustices committed by Canada, such as Indian Residential School policies, is iteratively couched in the promise of *reconciliation*.

Regan describes state-driven reconciliation initiatives (such as Alternative Dispute Resolution) as tantamount to “re-gifting,” where reparations processes resemble “a new variation of the peacemaker myth that promised to bring neutral justice to Indians in order to save or heal them” and thereby reify the paternalistic relationship established by the Indian Act. While Regan remains suspicious of the state’s deployment of reconciliation discourses, she sees potential for redress movements to enact “a liberatory form of non-violent resistance.” Building on this logic, *Unsettling* advocates for a “settler call for action,” which entails an individual (and collective) psychic decolonization that will serve as a necessary step towards achieving justice and material restitution for Indigenous peoples.

In her introduction, Regan mobilizes Roger Epp’s concept of the “settler problem” to outline a “decolonizing pedagogical strategy that is designed to teach Canadians about their history as a way to unsettle and transform how they view the past.” The text explores how witnessing and testimony can initiate a crucial and informative dialogue between Indigenous peoples and settler-Canadians. Pedagogical strategies are central to the mandate of Truth and Reconciliation of Canada (a process

negotiated through the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement in 2006) as a means to end a prolonged period of collective and institutional denial surrounding residential schooling. Regan aptly positions the role of pedagogy as a way to precipitate change in the *content* and *practice* of Canadian history. Therefore, decolonization requires not only the sharing of testimony and the active listening of witnesses, but the embrace and implementation of Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies in Canadian institutions.

Regan’s project seeks to unite “works that run on parallel tracks that rarely intersect” as she juxtaposes the work of scholar-practitioners in the field of treaty claims and negotiations, “historians of Indigenous-settler relations,” and educators who address the “commemoration of a difficult past.” Her ability to fuse literatures from the burgeoning field of settler studies and anticolonial scholarship is impressive, and her extensive literature review reveals a compelling argument that widens the scope of Indigenous-settler reconciliation. Regan is careful to place the violation of treaties and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands at the center of the process, thereby resisting the state’s tendency to reduce colonialism to residential schooling in order to foreclose on the past.

Regan’s unique methodological approach combines decolonial and feminist methods with critical pedagogy, drawing notably on the work of Paulo Freire. She also employs autoethnography to demonstrate personal feelings of “unsettlement” relating to her participation in reconciliation events, namely the Apology Feast in Hazelton held on Gitksan territory (chapter 7). While she frames autoethnography as a methodology that resists the researcher’s quest for “objective” truth, there is some danger that her personal narrative will be conflated with the category of “settler” writ large. Regan describes a white, English-Canadian settler response to colonial history that may not be representative of the heterogeneity of Canada’s citizenry. For this reason, I believe Regan’s audience could benefit from reading the Aboriginal Healing Foundation’s *Cultivating Canada: Reconciliation through the Lens of Diversity* (2011) alongside *Unsettling*. The AHF volume incorporates a generous collection of responses to Indigenous-settler reconciliation from diverse settler communities.

Seeking to navigate the complex terrain of reconciliation in Canada, Regan’s text is an important contribution to settler studies in Canada. *Unsettling* encourages settlers to revisit the problematic appropriation of terms such as *warrior* and *peacemaker* that have been grossly misrepresented in settler myths as a way to reframe Indigenous approaches to reconciliation. In doing so, Regan demonstrates how attitudinal shifts may engender new material realities.

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